

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /005 R

66011  
DRAFTED BY: EA:ANP:TJWAJDA  
APPROVED BY:EA:ANP:CASQUIRE  
----- 128083  
R 260450Z AUG 76  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
INFO CINCPAC

S E C R E T STATE 212014

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM PORT MORESBY DATED AUGUST 23, 1976  
SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO BANGKOK, CANBERRA, JAKARTA, KUALA  
LUMPUR, MANILA, RANGOON, SINGAPORE IS REPEATED TO YOU: QUOTE

S E C R E T PORT MORESBY 0865

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2  
TAGS: MPOL PP UR XB XP  
SUBJ: PERCEPTIONS OF SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN PACIFIC

REF: STATE 187556

1. DEGREE OF AWARENESS OF SOVIET NAVNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN  
PACIFIC IS QUITE LIMITED IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA. DEPARTMENT  
OF FOREIGN AFFIARS AND TRADE (DFAT) WROTE AUSTRALIAN HIGH  
COMMISSION IN JUNE ASKING FOR WHATEVER INFORMATION GOA  
MIGHT HAVE ON SINO-SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN PACIFIC, AND THIS  
WAS FOLLOWED BY REQUEST FOR DISCUSSION ON SUBJECT BETWEEN  
FONMIN KIKI AND GOA DURING VISIT TO CANBERRA IN EARLY  
JULY. CLOSED SEMINAR ON FOREIGN POLICY FOR BENEFIT OF  
DFAT AND OTHER GPNG OFFICIALS IN MID-JULY INCLUDED PAPERS  
PRESENTED BY ACADEMICIANS ON SINO-SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN  
PACIFIC. GPNG WAS EAGER TO DISCUSS SUBJECT INFORMALLY

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AT SP FORUM MEETING IN NAURU IN LATE JULY.

2. AWARENESS EXTENDS, WE BELIEVE, TO SMALL GROUP IN GOVT (DFAT, A FEW TOP MILITARY OFFICERS, AND SOME PEOPLE AROUND PRIME MINISTER) BUT PROBABLY NOT TO PARLIAMENT, MOST MILITARY AND GOVT OFFICIALS, NOR TO GENERAL PUBLIC. ONLY DAILY PAPER IS AUSTRALIAN-OWNED AND EDITED, AND WHILE EDITOR IS UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE OF SOVIET ACTIVITY, IT IS NOT A SUBJECT HE HARPS ON.

3. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AWARENESS OF POSSIBLE SOVIET ACTIVITY IN WATERS OF BOTH PNG AND SOLOMON ISLANDS HAS BEEN HEIGHTENED BY REPEATED SIGHTINGS OF UNIDENTIFIED SUBMARINES WHICH SURFACE IN WATERS OF PNG AND SOLOMONS. WE ARE TOLD THAT THESE SUBMARINES HAVE NO VISIBLE MARKINGS, THAT PERSONNEL APPEAR, SCAN THE HORIZON WITH BINOCULARS, GO BELOW, AND THEN THE SUBMARINE DISAPPEARS.

4. AWARENESS IS NOT AS YET SUFFICIENT TO SIGNIFICANTLY ALTER OR OFFSET VIEWS ON WIDER SECURITY AND POLITICAL ISSUES. PRELIMINARY REACTION OF A FEW OFFICIALS IN DK M WHO ARE THINKING A LITTLE ABOUT THZDISSUE IS TO WISH THAT ALL OF GREAT POWERS WOULD WITHDRAW FROM PACIFIC AND LEAVE THE PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS ALONE. THESE OFFICIALS HAVE SAID FROM TIME TO TIME THAT THEY DON'T WANT TO SEE THE PACIFIC CARVED INTO SPHERES OF INFLUENCE. OLDER OFFICIALS WHO CAN REMEMBER WORLD WAR II, HOWEVER, ARE A LITTLE MORE AWARE OF THE REALITIES OF SUPER POWER POLITICS.

5. GPNG IS VERY TIMOROUS IN DEALING WITH MAJOR POWERS, AND SERIOUS BLUNDER BY USSR COULD BRING ABOUT STRONG ANTI-SOVIET REACTION. SOVIET MUSCLE-FLEXING IN THIS AREA COULD CREATE ANTI-SOVIET ATMOSPHERE WHICH MIGHT POSSIBLY CREATE AN ENHANCED PRO-US MOOD ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT ALSO INTENSIFY WISH THAT ALL SUPER-POWERS WOULD WITHDRAW FROM PACIFIC.

6. THE RUMOR THAT A COMMUNIST COUNTRY (PRESUMABLY USSR) IS SUPPLYING (OR IS TRYING TO SUPPLY) ARMS TO THE IRIANESE DISSIDENT GROUPS SURFACES FROM TIME TO TIME  
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(IT WAS IN YESTERDAY'S PAPER AGAIN), AND IF IRREFUTABLE EVIDENCE SHOULD EMERGE CONFIRMING THIS RUMOR, BELIEVE GPNG WOULD REACT VERY ADVERSELY.

7. TO SPECULATE FURTHER, SHOULD THERE BE SOVIET SUPPORT (MILITARY OR DIPLOMATIC) OF THE BOUGAINVILLE SEPARATISTS, SUCH SUPPORT WOULD BITTERLY ANTAGONIZE AND FRIGHTEN GPNG AND PEOPLE OF PNG. BELIEVE THEY

COULDREACT VERY ADVERSELY. BOUGAINVILLE SITUATION PRESENTLY SEEMS MORE RELAXED THAN IT HAS BEEN FOR A YEAR, BUT POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT IT COULD AGAIN DETERIORATE AND THAT SOVIETS COULD EXPLOIT ANY SUCH DETERIORATION.

8. JAPAN IS IMPORTANT COMMERCIALY IN PNG AND EVEN MORE SO IN SOLOMON ISLANDS. THIS IMPORTANCE HAS DEVELOPED AT EXPENSE OF AUSTRALIAN COMMERCIAL PRESENCE. NEITHER PNG NOR THE SOLOMONS, WE BELIEVE, WOULD LOOK TO JAPAN AS A COUNTERBALANCE TO USSR, AND WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS JAPAN WOULD CHANGE AS THE RESULT OF SOVIET ACTIVITY.  
OLMSTED UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, FORCE & TROOP LEVELS, MILITARY PLANS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976STATE212014  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** EA:ANP:TJWAJDA  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** X2  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760325-1258  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760816/aaaaanku.tel  
**Line Count:** 129  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ORIGIN EA  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 STATE 187556  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 25 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <25 MAY 2004 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by BoyleJA>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PERCEPTIONS OF SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN PACIFIC  
**TAGS:** MPOL, PINR, MORG, PP, UR, XB, XP  
**To:** CINCPAC  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006